

# TraCen Cape May Education Update #319

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## Congratulations!!

The following personnel in the Cape May area passed Coast Guard Institute end-of-course, AQEs, and other tests since the last update:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Work Site</b>	<b>Test</b>
HS3 Justin Eshbaugh	HSWL FO Cape May	HS2*
HS3 Samantha Randall	HSWL FO Cape May	HS2*

\* First attempt

Well done, both of you!

And if you've just finished a degree program or have any other noteworthy academic achievement to brag about, please let me know so I can recognize you for it.

## Question of the Week

**Q:** I applied for tuition assistance six weeks ago. My course is about to start and the school is demanding payment. I thought TA was supposed to take care of the payment. Should I submit another TA application?

**A:** While the Coast Guard pays for your course via TA, it can't do so unless you provide your TA authorization to your school. Did you download your TA authorization from the eTA web site (<https://myeducation.netc.navy.mil/>)? If not, do so immediately to see if your authorization has been completed. Usually, the Coast Guard Institute processes TA applications in no more than two days.

To see if your authorization's ready for you to download, click on "My Tuition Assistance (WebTA)" then "Existing Applications". Look in the column on the far right ("Status") and look for the word "Authorized", then check the "Creation Date" (left-hand column) of that authorized application to see if it corresponds to the date you submitted your application. If it does, click "View" and then right click on "Print Document" to save it to your computer.

Once you've downloaded your authorization, open it and check it over for accuracy. If everything's accurate, print it out, put your SSN and signature in the corresponding blanks and provide it to your school as payment. Until you've done this, the school will keep demanding payment.

You should have received an e-mail from the Navy ([admin@voled.training.navy.mil](mailto:admin@voled.training.navy.mil)) providing the instructions above. In the future, don't wait until your school is demanding payment before asking your ESO for help. If you haven't received the e-mail from the Navy within two weeks after submitting your TA request, check your computer's e-mail "Junk" folder for it. If it's not there, contact your ESO immediately.

If you have a question you'd like answered as a Question of the Week, e-mail it to me at [andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil](mailto:andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil).

## Web Page in the Spotlight

There's a lot of stuff on the TraCen Cape May web site you might not check out if you didn't know it was there. So this week, I'm spotlighting ***Helmets to Hardhats Program*** (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/h2h.asp>).

## Grammar & Usage Corner

This feature will touch on grammar and usage questions as well as confused/misused words. This week, the often-confused words are *adapt* and *adopt*.

**Adapt** is a verb meaning to make or become suitable to or fit for a specific use or situation.

**Adopt** is a verb with a number of meanings.

- to take into one's family through legal means and raise as one's legal child ("The family had adopted five children from troubled backgrounds").
- to take and follow by choice or assent ("The organization was famous for being quick to adopt the latest techniques") or to take up and make one's own ("She adopted her subordinate's idea instantly").
- to take on or assume ("He adopted an air of importance when he was advanced").
- to vote to accept ("Congress adopted the resolution unanimously").
- to choose as standard or required in a course ("The board of education adopted a new history textbook").

If there are any word usage, grammar, or similar issues you've encountered, please e-mail them to me at [andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil](mailto:andrew.g.webb@uscg.mil).

## Office of Work-Life Scholarships

Work-Life's scholarship programs provide information and resources on financial assistance to all members of Team Coast Guard: regular and Reserve military, their dependents, and civilian employees (civil service, CGES, and MWR). For more information, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/worklife/scholarship.asp>.

Also, check out the scholarship info and resources at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/scholarships.asp>.

## Scholarship for Cape May-area Residents

The Wildwood chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is offering a \$500 scholarship for seniors at Wildwood High School or Wildwood Catholic High School.

For more information, contact Mr. John Burgin (TraCen Cape May Facilities Engineering) at 609-898-6948 or 609-536-2754.

## National Graduate School

(from LT Boyle at CGAS Atlantic City)

A representative from the National Graduate School will be at Air Station Atlantic City on Wednesday, 26 January 2011 at 1000 in the Modular Unit Training room. There will be a presentation of the program after which the representative will answer questions from anyone who's interested. Military personnel, civilian employees, and dependents are all welcome.

For more information, contact LT Erin Boyle ([erin.m.boyle@uscg.mil](mailto:erin.m.boyle@uscg.mil)), LT Darby Brown ([darby.m.brown@uscg.mil](mailto:darby.m.brown@uscg.mil)), or LT Jim Kenshalo ([james.r.kenshalo@uscg.mil](mailto:james.r.kenshalo@uscg.mil)).

## New GI Bill Changes Take Effect in March

On 05 March 2011, the first of many changes to the new (Post-9/11) GI Bill will take effect. These changes will apply only to active duty military personnel. On that date, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will no longer automatically pay the whole cost of college courses. Instead, the amount active duty personnel receive will depend on how long they've served on active duty. See the table at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/gibill-33.asp#payments>.

For example, let's say you've served for 32 months on active duty and have been taking two courses per term at State U. where the total cost of tuition and fees for those courses is \$6,800. The DVA will no longer pay the full \$6,800. Instead, it will pay only 90% of \$6,800. This is because, according to the table, those who've served between 30 and 36 months on active duty are entitled to payments at the 90% rate. Once you reach your third anniversary of active duty service, you'll be entitled to the 100% rate.

## Other New GI Bill Changes

On 01 August and 01 October 2011 other changes to the new GI Bill will take effect. The recent amendments to the new GI Bill

- make those pursuing programs other than those leading to a degree (e.g., vocational courses, flight training, apprenticeships, etc.) eligible for funding,
- allow reimbursement for licensing, certification, and admission tests,
- make students working toward a degree via distance learning courses eligible for a housing allowance,
- extend the book stipend to active duty personnel,
- extend the transferability provision to personnel in the NOAA and PHS commissioned corps,
- limits payments to private and foreign colleges/universities to \$17,500 per year (but retains the Yellow Ribbon program),
- eliminate the state payment-rate tables for publicly-funded colleges/universities and extends the rules applicable to undergraduate programs to graduate programs (i.e., the new GI Bill will now pay in-state tuition and fees for publicly-funded schools for both undergraduate and graduate courses).

I'm working on a comprehensive before-and-after comparison so you can see what's changed and how the changes will affect you. In the meantime, you can find a summary of these changes on the Department of Veterans' Affairs's web site ([http://www.gibill.va.gov/post-911/post-911-gi-bill-summary/Post911\\_changes.html](http://www.gibill.va.gov/post-911/post-911-gi-bill-summary/Post911_changes.html)).

## CollegeWeekLive

If you're the parent of a college-bound student or are otherwise interested in getting good information about college, check out CollegeWeekLive (CWL). CWL is an ongoing on-line college fair to help prospective students in their college planning by connecting them with colleges in a live, interactive environment. You'll be able to find information from dozens of colleges and universities on things like admissions, financing, admission test preparation, college visits, and finding the college which best fits your son, daughter, or yourself.

In addition, practically every day a different college has a virtual open house. These are particularly useful to dependent children trying to decide on a college to attend. And while they're aimed mainly at students, parents and counselors are also welcome. For a complete listing of these open houses and other events, go to [http://www.collegeweeklive.com/en\\_CA/guest/college\\_events/refcode=NWSLTR\\_12\\_6](http://www.collegeweeklive.com/en_CA/guest/college_events/refcode=NWSLTR_12_6).

This is really a fantastic tool. You can do everything you can do at a physical college fair except physically pick up brochures and shake people's hands. You can ask questions of speakers and school representatives, you can download information, you can even chat with current students at various colleges.

## Wanna Finish Your Degree?

A number of people have asked me if I knew anything about the option of leaving the Coast Guard for a time to complete a degree program, then coming back in. The policy that allows you to do this is called Temporary Separation, and is laid out in article 12.F. of the *Personnel Manual*.

This policy "allows Coast Guard members to temporarily separate and pursue growth or other opportunities outside the service, while providing a mechanism for their return to active duty. . . . Under this policy, career oriented officers and enlisted members are allowed a onetime separation from Active Duty for up to two years to either discharge parental responsibilities to care for newborn children (CNC), or allow members to pursue personal interests that are restricted by continuing on active duty, e.g., education."

This is a great opportunity if you'd like to go to school full-time to finish a degree (whether for personal or professional reasons). Since you wouldn't be considered to be on active duty while temporarily separated, you could use the GI Bill for your education. For the full story, see article 12.F. of the *Personnel Manual* and your SPO.

## Coast Guard Foundation Grants

Although the Coast Guard Institute is accepting applications for Coast Guard Foundation grants, be aware that there is currently no funding for these grants. The Institute estimates that funding will be available in approximately two months, but there is no guarantee this will be the case.

Remember: funding for these grants comes from individuals (civilian and military) who contribute money when they can.

## Striker Programs Update

ALCOAST 591/10 announced that the BM, DC, MK, and SK striker programs have been reinstated indefinitely. However, the EM3 and YN3 striker programs have been terminated because most EPQs for those ratings can't be completed outside of "A" school or the YN3 distance learning program.

## Transferring New GI Bill Benefits to Children?

Once you've transferred new GI Bill benefits to a dependent child (as described at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/gjbill-33c.asp#procedure>), fill out the VA 22-1990E form (or the VONAPP equivalent) **only** if your child is already 18 or has graduated from high school.

If the child to whom you've transferred the benefit hasn't yet graduate from high school or is younger than 18, the Department of Veterans' Affairs will reject the application. And be aware that the transfer has to be done before the child turns 23.

## Coast Guard Foundation Scholarships

ALCOAST 007/11 was published last Friday, announcing six different scholarships open to dependent children of active duty, retired, or deceased Coast Guard enlisted personnel, and dependent children of enlisted personnel in the Coast Guard Reserve currently on active duty. The application deadline for these is 01 April 2011.

The Coast Guard Foundation also has two other scholarships. One is open to employees of the Aviation Logistics Center in Elizabeth City, NC (active duty officers and enlisted personnel, federal civil service employees, and their dependents). The deadline for this scholarship is 15 March 2011.

The other program is open to dependent children of Coast Guard personnel who lost a parent in Coast Guard operations. Applications for this program are accepted at any time.

For more information about these scholarships, see ALCOAST 007/11 at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/doc/ALCOAST007-11.pdf>.

## Military Spouse Scholarship

Scholarships in the name of Joanne Holbrook Patton are awarded to spouses of military personnel in the regular and Reserve components, the National Guard, military retirees, and survivors of military personnel killed in the line of duty. Scholarship funds may be used for tuition, fees, and college/university room and board for students pursuing a GED, ESL courses, vocational training, professional certification, undergraduate or graduate courses. Students may be pursuing these either in-class or via distance learning, full-time or part-time.

For more information about these scholarships, go to <http://www.militaryfamily.org/our-programs/military-spouse-scholarships/>. The application deadline is 31 January 2011.

## Scholarships for Women In or Veterans of the Military

The Women's Memorial Foundation administers the two programs each of which awards scholarships of up to \$5,000 for women working toward bachelor's or master's degrees.

The Foundation also administers another program which awards a \$1,000 scholarship to be used toward an undergraduate nursing degree.

For more information on these, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/diversity/gendernews.asp>.

## Is Renting Textbooks Really Cheaper Than Buying?

(from mint.com)

Before you (or your college-bound child) buys textbooks, check out this article: <http://www.mint.com/blog/saving/renting-textbooks-12092010/>

## LEAD Program

Although it's too late this year (applications have to be submitted by 25 January), middle school and high school students should seriously consider getting ready to apply for any of the three programs sponsored by an organization called LEAD – Leadership Education and Development. These programs provide fantastic opportunities to motivated middle school and high school students.

**LEAD Business** "is a national partnership of top U.S. corporations and graduate business schools that encourages talented students from diverse backgrounds to pursue careers in business." It is open to high school juniors with a "B" average or better, combined test scores of at least 100 on the PSAT, 1000 on the SAT (critical reading and math combined), or 22 on the ACT. Applicants must also demonstrate leadership ability and active involvement in their schools and communities. However, applicants need not have previous experience in or knowledge of the field of business. For more information, go to <http://www.leadbusinesssite.org/HOME.html>.

**LEAD Engineering** “exists to introduce students of color with outstanding academic performance and demonstrated leadership skills to the field of engineering. The mission of LEAD Engineering is to lay the foundation through an intense curriculum for an increase in the number and quality of diversified students interested in careers in engineering and other technical fields.” It is open to students in their sophomore or junior years of high school with at least an average GPA 3.2 and combined test scores of at least 100 on the PSAT, 1000 on the SAT (critical reading and math combined), or 22 on the ACT. Applicants must have successfully completed a minimum of two science courses and Algebra II. They must also be US Citizens or permanent residents. For more information, go to <http://www.leadengineering.org/>.

**LEAD Global** “exists to expose American students of color to global career opportunities alongside peers from different countries in one program so that all participants might make better informed decisions when choosing a college or profession.” Applicants must currently be in the ninth or tenth grade and have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA. They must be mature, stable, adaptable, and self-disciplines in new environments and they must have a valid passport. For more information, go to <http://www.leadglobalsite.org/HOME.html>.

## Reservists' GI Bill Eligibility Form

The Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE, form DD-2384-1) is the form which lays out the criteria which members of the Coast Guard Reserve must meet to be eligible for benefits under the Selected Reserve Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB-SR). It also briefly describes the Reservists' benefits. Most important, though, the NOBE states the date the Reservist first became eligible for MGIB-SR benefits.

The NOBE is a controlled form. In the Coast Guard, the **only** authorized issuers of NOBEs are TraCen Cape May's Recruit SPO and "A" School SPOs. Reservists should **not** ask their ESOs for, and ESOs should **not** provide Reservists with, NOBEs.

If you're a Reservist who never received or who has lost his/her NOBE, or who has questions about MGIB-SR eligibility, send an e-mail to the Reserve Education Program Manager at [reserveVAeducation@uscg.mil](mailto:reserveVAeducation@uscg.mil). Include your name and either the word “NOBE” or “MGIB-SR” (depending on the subject of your question) in the subject line.

## Don't Pay for Technology: 25 Freebies for Students

(from Education-Portal.com)

“In today's economic climate, paying for technology isn't prudent, and for some students, it isn't even an option. Fortunately, there are plenty of freebies on the web that can help with document creation, research, writing, storage, collaboration, studying and more. Here are 25 free web apps and software programs that may be useful to students.” [http://education-portal.com/articles/Dont\\_Pay\\_for\\_Technology\\_25\\_Freebies\\_for\\_Students.html](http://education-portal.com/articles/Dont_Pay_for_Technology_25_Freebies_for_Students.html)

## Harvard Financial Aid Initiative (HFAI)

“Since 2006, students from families with incomes less than \$60,000 who are accepted to Harvard under our regular admissions policies have no expected parent contribution for their education. Additionally, families with incomes between \$60,000 and \$80,000 have seen their expected parent contributions significantly reduced. Financial aid is available to all students based on assessed need. Families with incomes up to \$180,000 have an average expected parent contribution of 10 percent or less of their income and, as we continue to take individual circumstances into consideration in our assessment of financial need, many families in even higher income brackets also receive substantive financial aid.”

For more information, go to [http://www.admissions.college.harvard.edu/financial\\_aid/hfai/index.html](http://www.admissions.college.harvard.edu/financial_aid/hfai/index.html)

## Coast Guard Institute Transcripts for Recent Boot Camp Grads

If you graduated from Coast Guard recruit training since 01 June 2009, you should hold off on requesting an education assessment from the Coast Guard Institute.

As you probably know, you would have earned college credit for various things you learned in boot camp if you'd taken college courses covering those things. The organization which certifies that this is the case is the American Council on Education or ACE. Earlier this month, ACE re-evaluated the recruit training curriculum that's been in place at TraCen

Cape May since 01 June 2009. Until ACE's report has been published, any transcript you receive as a result of an assessment request will show "Pending Review" rather than course names and credits for topics covered in boot camp.

As soon as the new credit distribution has been announced, I'll publish it here. In the meantime, you can see how many credits in which subjects correlate with previous versions of the Coast Guard recruit training curriculum at ACE's web site (<http://www.militaryguides.acenet.edu/>).

## Occupational Certification & Apprenticeship Programs

A number of occupational certification programs are available through your ESO. The United Services Military Apprenticeship Program (USMAP - <https://usmap.cnet.navy.mil/usmapss/static/usmap.jsp>) is a program that allows active duty servicemembers to earn apprenticeship certification in 125 skills learned through work experience and related technical instruction. All you have to do is document the experience you gain while performing your regular military duties; no after-hours work is required.

You can also get certified in dozens of different occupational fields (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/cert.asp>) through a large number of nationally-recognized certification organizations. You can get certified as a broadcast engineer, crane operator, automotive service professional, dental assistant, contract manager, medical technologist, administrative professional, personal trainer, industrial security professional, safety professional, or any of many other specialties. And if you're eligible for GI Bill benefits, you can likely get reimbursed up to \$2,000 for the cost of each certification exam.

## Re-taking ASVAB Tests

Are you interested in going to "A" school for a particular rate, but realize your ASVAB scores aren't high enough? You may be unaware that at any time you can re-take one or more of the tests which comprise the AFCT (Armed Forces Classification Test) – the version of the ASVAB available only to military personnel.

Before you pick up the phone to call your ESO to schedule a test, however, keep in mind two things. First, whatever score you get on the re-test (higher, lower, or the same) it becomes your new official score. Second, if you're unsatisfied with the score you get on a re-test, you must wait six months to take that test again.

## Other Considerations

- The VE score represents a scaled composite of the scores on two separate tests: PC and WK. You can't take a single test to improve your VE score.
- The WK test is a vocabulary test and, as such, is virtually impossible to prepare for. If you've become an avid reader since you took the ASVAB at a MEP Station or have memorized a dictionary, you may improve your WK score greatly. But if not, you should think twice about re-taking it – especially if your existing score is relatively high.
- You can qualify for five ratings' "A" schools (AET, AMT, AST, ET, IT) either by getting the required composite score or by getting an AFQT score of at least 65. (Your AFQT score is equal to AR + MK + (2 x VE).) To qualify for these schools via the AFQT score, you do *not* have to have a minimum AR score of 52.

For more information about the AFCT/ASVAB, each of its tests, and how to prepare for them, go to <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/asvab.asp>.

## TraCen Cape May Testing Calendar

Tests at TraCen Cape May are administered by appointment according to the following schedule:

Mondays (0800): Defense Language Proficiency Tests

Tuesdays (0800): EOCTs and AQEs\*

Thursdays (0745): college tests, CLEP tests, DSSTs, SATs, ACTs

\* If operations or your work schedule make it impossible for you to take an EOCT or AQE on a Tuesday morning, you can take it on a Thursday morning.

This schedule leaves most of the day on Tuesdays, as well as all day on Wednesdays, Fridays available for other occasional tests, counseling, and other face-to-face interactions with you. When no one is taking a language test, the doors to the Education Center are open on Mondays, as well.

If you call and I don't answer the phone, I'm usually administering a test (and, because of the noise, can't talk on the phone) or otherwise busy with someone in the office. E-mail is the best way to get in touch with me.

## Thinking of Teaching?

Are you interested in teaching after you leave the Coast Guard? Troops to Teachers also provides counseling and referral services to military personnel interested in beginning a second career in public education as a teacher. And the DANTES Troops to Teachers office will help you identify teacher certification requirements, programs leading to certification, and employment opportunities. The main web site ([http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes\\_web/troopstoteachers/index.asp](http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/troopstoteachers/index.asp)) has all kinds of information about the program. Including a new on-line way to determine if you're eligible to participate in Troops to Teachers: [http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes\\_web/troopstoteachers/eligibility.asp](http://www.dantes.doded.mil/dantes_web/troopstoteachers/eligibility.asp).

## Leaving the Coast Guard?

If you're leaving the Coast Guard within the next twelve months (whether through retirement, resignation, or expiration of your enlistment), you should be making plans for what you'll be doing after you take off your uniform for the last time. Check out the information on my web site related to career transition (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/careertrans.asp>).

You should also request an education assessment from the Coast Guard Institute (<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/collegefaq.asp>) to get a transcript of college credit you've acquired through your service in the Coast Guard. If you don't request an assessment before you leave active duty, you can't get one later. If you're not planning to go to school right away, you'll probably need to find work. Here are two excellent resources for finding a job – or even a second career. Also, Military.com has a very good series of web pages devoted to veterans (<http://www.military.com/Careers/Home/0,13373,,00.htm>).

And don't discount the idea of working in the public sector. Not only are there thousands of jobs in the federal government, identical to private-sector jobs in which you can put your skills, knowledge, and experience to use while maintaining job security unavailable in the private sector (<http://www.fedjobs.gov/>), governmental entities at all levels – state, county, municipality, school district, port district, etc. – provide similar benefits.

## ACCC's Library Open for Studying

One more thing: the new campus's classrooms, labs, and library are all state-of-the-art. Even if you're not ready to register for classes right away, you should take the opportunity to visit the campus and look around. The Director of Academic and Student Services has extended a personal invitation to anyone who'd like to use the library to study, for research, or for pleasure reading. It's very quiet, well-lit, and has very comfortable furniture.

## **Quick Reference Study Guides**

The TraCen Education Center also has a binder full of SparkCharts Quick Reference Guides on almost 40 subjects. You're welcome to use these in the Education Center or make copies to take with you. You can check out the subjects available at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/capemay/Education/books.asp#spark>.

## **Education Center Library**

In addition to SparkCharts, the Education Center also has a library of books on leadership, management, Coast Guard history, and other topics. Also in the library are the latest Professional Qualification Guides (PQGs) for each rating.

The Education Center also has dozens of brochures and books on college, financial aid, the officer program application process, and other things. If there are multiple copies, you're welcome to take one.